Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem

Every Century Will Have its Reviver(s)

by Unknown Author
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Aboo Daawood said in his *Sunan*, *Awwul-Ma'bood* (11/385):

Start of the Book of Battles
Chapter: What is Mentioned about Each Century

Sulaymaan ibn Daawood – Mahryy, related to us: Ibn Wahb related to us: Sa'eed ibn Abee Ayyoob related to me: from Shuraheel ibn Yazweed al-Ma'aafiriyy: from Aboo 'Alqamah: from Aboo Hurairah – as best I know from Allaah's Messenger, *sallallaahu alaihi wa sallam,* who said, *"Allaah will raise for this Ummah at the head of every hundred years, he/those who will revive its religion for it." 'Awnul-Ma'bood* (11/385-396) of al-Azeemabaadee.

"*'At the head of every hundred years …'*" i.e., its end or its beginning – when knowledge and the *sunnah* becomes scarce and ignorance and innovation become widespread – said by al-Qaaree." *"He/those who will revive its religion for it …"* "i.e., make the *sunnah* clear from innovation and increase knowledge and aid its people and curb and subdue the innovators." "Al-Alqmaee said in his explanation that the meaning of *tajdeed* (revival) is revival of action upon the Book and the *Sunnah* and command in accordance with them – that had been effaced."

"Note: Know that what is meant by the head of the hundred in this *hadeeth* is its completion. The author of *Majma'ul-Bihaar* said, "What is meant is one who is alive and a well-known scholar, and at-Teebee said, 'What is meant by his being raised/sent is one who is alive and a scholar of note when the hundred is completed – this is what occurs in the introduction of *Fathul-Qadeer* of al-Manaawee and *Khulaasatul-Athaar* of Muhyee. And as-Suyooytee said in his poem about the revivers , 'And the condition for that is that the hundred should pass and he is alive amongst the people – known as being a person having standing in knowledge, and propogating the *Sunnah* with his speech.'

And the author of *Mirqaatus-Su'ood* quotes Ibn al-Atheer as saying, "And what is meant by the one mentioned is one who is alive, known, famous and pointed out when the hundred finishes. And the clear proof that what is meant by the head of the hundred is their end, not their beginning is that az-Zuhree, and Ahmad ibn Hanbal and others from the earlier and later Imaams are agreed that from the revivers at the head of the first hundred was 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez, *rahimahullaah*, and at the end of the second hundred was Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee, *rahimahullaah*, and 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez died in the year 101 at the age of forty – and his *khilaafah* lasted for two and a half years, and ash-Shaafi'ee died in the year 204 at the age of fifty-four.

Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajr said in *Tawaaliyyut-Ta'sees*, Aboo Bakr al-Bazzaar said, "I heard 'Abdul-Malik ibn 'Abdul-Hameed al-Maymoonee say, 'I was with Ahmad ibn Hanbal, and ash-Shaafi'ee was mentioned. So I saw Ahmad extolling him, and he said, 'It is related that the Prophet, *sallallaahu alaihi wa sallam,* said, *"Allaah will provide one at the head of every hundred years one who will teach the people their Religion."'* Ahmad said, 'So for the first century there was 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez and for the second century was ash-Shaafi'ee.''"

And by way of Sa'eed al-Firyaabee who said, "Ahmad ibn Hanbal said, 'Allaah will provide for the people in every hundred years one who will teach the people the matters of the *Sunnah*, and rebut lies from the Prophet, *sallallaahu alaihi wa sallam.* So we looked and saw that 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez was at the head of the first hundred, and at the end of the second was ash-Shaafi'ee ...

So if you say: what is apparent from the language with regard to the meaning of, '... the head of the century ...' (*ra'sul-mi'ah*) is its beginningn not its end – then how can its end be what is meant?

I say: Rather it occurs in the language also that it can mean the end. The author of *Taajul-'Aroos*, said, "The head of a thing is its extremity, and it is said, 'Its end.'" I say: And upon this is the *hadeeth* of Ibn 'Umar, *"Do you see this night of yours? Then at the head of a hundred years from it, no-one is alive upon the face of the earth will remain."* Reported by the two Shaikhs."

And al-Haafidh said in *Fathul-Baaree* in explanation of the head of the century, "Meaning: at the end of the century."

"The author of *Majaalisul-Abraar* said, 'And what is meant by revival of that which has been effaced from action upon the Book and the *Sunnah* and command according to them,' and he said in it, 'And that reviver (*mujaddid*) will not be known except by preponderance of opinion of those scholars who live in his time – due to his condition and the benefit that is derived from his knowledge – since the reviver (*mujaddid*) must be one having knowledge of the branches of knowledge of the Religion, that which is apparent and that which is not apparent, aiding the *Sunnah* (*naasirun lis-Sunnah*), cutting off innovation, and that his knowledge is recognised by the people of his time ..."

So it is clear that the *mujaddid* will not be except one who is a scholar of the branches of knowledge of the Religion and along with that strives and gives great attention day and night to reviving matters of the *Sunnah* and spreading it, and aiding its companion, and killing-off innovation and new matters and effacing them and routing its people with the tongue, or by writing books, or teaching, or so on – and one who is not like that can in no way be a *mujaddid* – even if he is a scholar of Religious sciences, famous amongst the people and referred to by them ..."

"Further Note: And know that it is not essential that at the head of each century there should only be a single reviver, rather it is possible for there to be more than one. Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajr said in *Tawaaliyut-Ta'sees*, 'Some scholars have taken this *hadeeth* to refer to more than a single person,

and it is possible from the wording of the *hadeeth* which we have quoted ... since the *hadeeth* indicates that the revival indicated is general for all the people of that time. And this was very possible with regard to 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez and then ash-Shaafi'ee. But as for those who came after that, then they had others to share with them."

He said in *Fathul-Baaree*, "And it (i.e., taking the *hadeeth* to refer to more than one person) is allowable since those qualities requiring revival are not restricted to one type of good, and it is not essential that all of the qualities of good come together in a single person – unless that is claimed for 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez – since he was the one in charge of the affairs at the end of the first century, and he possessed all the qualities of good and had precedence in them. Therefore Ahmad said that they took the *hadeeth* to mean him. But as for those who came after him, then ash-Shaafi'ee even though he had excellent qualities, yet he was not in charge of *Jihaad* or of judging with justice – so upon this anyone having part of these qualities at the end of the century is referred to, whether a number of people or not."